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AUTHOR Katz, Malcolm
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ABSTRACT

Designed to probe the question of the specific administrative problems within their schools that principals in Georgia schools deem to be most troublesome, this study reports on the findings of a survey of 403 randomly selected elementary and secondary principals. For each of 10 needs areas that had been determined through a 1987 study to be the most critical as viewed by Georgia's principals, 3 specific problems (out of 7 problems correlated with each need area) were selected as most troublesome by principals. A comparison is made between a parallel study of superintendents and principals in four needs areas. The most outstanding problem in the view of the principals was completing the increasing amount of paperwork without neglecting personal contact with students, teachers, and parents. The second problem area was allowing a larger portion of time to be spend in their instructional leadership role. Related problems centered on working with marginal staff, focusing supervision properly, coping with unfavorable performance, and understanding legal ramifications of teacher evaluation. Other problems were avoiding faculty stress, motivating teachers to participate in inservice programs, and responding to faculty and staff burnout. Rank order of the problem areas as identified by Georgia principals is appended. (JD)

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Georgia Principals Identify Their Most Troublesome Administrative Problems: A 1988 Survey

Prepared for
The Georgia Educational Leadership Academy
Dr. Jimmy Puckett, Director

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by

Malcolm Katz, Ed.D.
Associate Professor
Educational Leadership & Research
Georgia Southern College
November, 1988

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Background to Study

This study follows and complements the Georgia Educational Leadership Academy's 1987 study of the administrative needs of principals in Georgia.[1] That study had revealed, amidst a profusion of other data, one set of results which had important implications for the Academy and other providers of staff development for school leaders: the identification of the ten highest ranked administrative needs as perceived by principals for their own individual schools.

Having determined which of a very wide range of administrative needs were viewed as the ten most critical by Georgia's principals,[2] the question arose as to what was behind those principals' perceptions, what specific problems within their own schools were associated with each of those highest ranked needs? If the reader can imagine a scenario in which he meets the body of Georgia's school principals at one time, and says to them, "I know which administrative needs you ranked highest in 1987, but can you tell me what is troubling you right now about each of those major needs," the reader has grasped the intent this study. Those ten highest ranked administrative needs in 1987 were:

I. Evaluating Program Effectiveness; Implementing Changes
II. Stress Management
III. Computer and Data Processing
IV. Legal Considerations
V. Supervision, Evaluation of Staff
VI. Instructional Supervision
VII. Time Management
VIII. In-Service for Staff (certified and classified)
IX. Staff Morale, Group Dynamics
X. Classroom Management

The New Study and Survey

The 1988 survey was designed to answer this question: which of several possible problem areas associated with each of the ten highest ranked needs of individual schools do principals identify as most troublesome?

[1]Katz, Malcolm, The Administrative Needs of Georgia's Elementary and Secondary School: A 1987 Survey of Principals, Georgia Educational Leadership Academy, November, 1987.

[2]Sixty-one administrative needs spread across six categories of typical task areas were rated by 425 principals, for a response percentage of 70.8 of those surveyed. Results were also shown by region and by elementary and secondary principals.

Seven likely problem areas for each of these ten highest ranked needs were chosen from scores of possible problem areas.[3] In May of 1988, a survey form was mailed to 403 elementary and secondary principals. Usable responses were received from 250 principals, 64.2 per cent of all the elementary principals surveyed and 61.1 per cent of all secondary principals surveyed, for an overall response rate of 62.0 per cent.

Principals were asked to identify for each administrative need the three problem areas of the seven offered which were "most troublesome". They could also write in a problem area if they felt it should have been included but had not been, for each of the ten administrative needs.

The Findings

For each of those highest ranked needs we will present below the seven problem areas (also called "descriptors" in the survey). The order will be shown in descending rank, from the one most often identified as "most troublesome" to the one responded to least often by the principals.[4]

We will then offer brief commentary on the highest three of these seven, as being worthy of special attention. They tell us the problem areas principals feel they should be focussing upon or doing more about. Finally, in this first section treating the findings, we will compare the responses of principals to those of superintendents. These latter were revealed in a separate, concurrent survey. In this regard will we spotlight four administrative needs that both groups had ranked among their highest ten in 1987. It is important to note that in all surveys, superintendents were asked to respond in terms of their *school districts*, while principals were asked to respond in terms of their own, *individual schools*.

[3]These were generated and partially culled by graduate student in educational leadership under the direction of the author and the problem areas finally selected by the author. Approximately two-thirds of these students were practicing education leaders; the remaining third were experienced staff members preparing for initial administrative certification.

[4]For all ten list of descriptors, this order turned out to be different from the order in which the descriptors appeared in the survey.

Table A

The Administrative Need Ranked #1:

"Evaluating Program Effectiveness: Implementing Changes"

Descriptors shown in rank order with number and per cent of principals identifying as among "most troublesome"

Rank	Descriptors	No. of Principals Identifying as "Most Troublesome"	Per cent of Principals
	EVALUATING PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS, IMPLEMENTING CHANGES		
1	Need defined criteria for use in identifying school/program effectiveness.	119	47.6
2	Need assistance in developing skills to manage change; i.e. diminished productivity, heightened anxiety, dissent, etc.	118	47.2
3	Increasing staff awareness of goals and their commitment to achieving these goals.	115	46.0
4	Need for additional training in needs analysis, clearly defined goals, and methods for achieving those goals.	113	45.2
5	Need to know how to develop and manage an adequate information system to determine the effectiveness of a program.	104	41.6
6	Need to correlate curriculum guides, textbooks, and learning materials when implementing change.	96	38.6
7	Need to evaluate change to determine the success of the change.	81	32.4

Comment

Of the ten sets of problem areas, these associated with "Evaluating program effectiveness; implementing changes," show least variation in frequency as "most troublesome" by principals. The most often cited problem area is, "Need defined criteria for use in identifying school/program effectiveness" (47.6 per cent). Closely following is "Need assistance in developing skills to manage change; i.e. diminished productivity, heightened anxiety, dissent, etc. (47.2 per cent). Third ranked is "Increasing staff awareness of goals and their commitment to achieving these goals" (46.0 per cent).

Apparently all seven of these descriptors are important problem areas to Georgia's principals; the least often cited was checked by almost one in three respondents, "Need to evaluate change to determine the success of the change" (32.4 per cent).

Comparing principals perceptions (for their own schools) with those of superintendents (for their school districts), we find:

Table A-1

Comparing Principals' and Superintendents' Most Frequently Identified Problem Areas Associated with "Evaluating Program Effectiveness; Implementing Changes"

Supt's. Rank	Princ's Rank	Problem Area	% Princ's	%Supt's
2	1	Need defined criteria for use in identifying school/program effectiveness.	47.6	55.6
3	2	Need assistance in developing skills to manage change; i.e. diminished productivity, heightened anxiety, dissent, etc.	47.2	51.9
4	3	Increasing staff awareness of goals and their commitment to achieving these goals.	46.0	43.7
1	4	Need for additional training in needs analysis, clearly defined goals, and methods for achieving those goals.	45.2	59.3
6	5	Need to know how to develop and manage an adequate information system to determine the effectiveness of a program.	41.6	31.9
5	6	Need to correlate curriculum guides, textbooks, and learning materials when implementing change.	38.6	36.3
7	7	Need to evaluate change to determine the success of the change.	32.4	17.8

A very high degree of congruence is evident between principals and superintendents as to their views of these problem areas. The principals' top-ranked problem area (criteria for school effectiveness and/or teacher effectiveness) is identified as #2 by superintendents and therefore worthy of special attention as a topic for in-service education directed to both groups

Table B

The Administrative Need Ranked #2:

"Stress Management"

Descriptors shown in rank order with number and per cent of principals identifying as among "most troublesome"

Rank	Descriptors	No. of Principals Identifying as "Most Troublesome"	Per cent of Principals
	STRESS MANAGEMENT		
1	Need to know how to avoid producing unnecessary stress for faculty and staff.	170	68.0
2	Improvement in dealing with unfavorable performance and/or termination of employees.	166	66.4
3	Additional training in how to manage time effectively to reduce stress.	148	59.2
4	Assistance in developing awareness of indicators of stress.	91	36.4
5	Additional training in how to separate stress of personal life from day-to-day work life.	83	33.2
6	Need additional training in prioritizing goals and needs.	42	16.8
7	Need in-service training on how to delegate responsibility.	39	15.6

Comment

The most frequently identified problem area is "Need to know how to avoid producing unnecessary stress for faculty and staff, "with more than two-thirds of all principals responding to this item (68 per cent). Second most frequently checked was "Improvement in dealing with unfavorable performance and/or termination of employees" (66.4 per cent). Just under two-thirds of principals cited "Additional training in how to manage time effectively to reduce stress produced by one's daily workload" (59.2 per cent).

Interestingly, principals show somewhat greater concern with stress experienced by others than with their own stress. The seriousness of their concern about dealing with poorly performing employees (66.47) is confirmed later in this study, where, under the administrative need

"Supervision, evaluation of staff" the respondents selected the issue of dealing with marginal staff members as their most frequently cited problem. Thirdly, they list problems with time management. Prioritizing goals and problems and delegating responsibility are among their least frequently cited problems of the entire 70 offered by the survey instrument.

Table C

The Administrative Need Ranked #3:

"Computer and Data Processing"

Descriptors shown in rank order with number and per cent of principals identifying as among "most troublesome"

Rank	Descriptors	No. of Principals Identifying as "Most Troublesome"	Per cent of Principals
	COMPUTER AND DATA PROCESSING		
1	Need to understand and determine the best use of computers for instructional purposes.	177	70.8
2	Need training in use of computers for scheduling of classes, record keeping, and other management uses.	146	58.4
3	Developing effective non-threatening training opportunities for teachers and staff.	107	42.8
4	Need direction in new state computer system implementation and its effects on individual school reporting procedures.	102	40.8
5	Evaluating and selecting hardware and software without having to depend on vendor representation.	86	34.4
6	Establishing and directing a working committee of staff who will evaluate the latest systems of data processing and will report regularly to the principal to keep the school up-to-date.	76	30.4
7	How to provide more feedback to central office regarding appropriateness of computer related decisions; e.g. software reports, etc.	43	17.2

Comment

Principals identified these problem areas with sufficiently different frequency to produce a visible spread among the seven descriptors. Most frequently cited (with almost three-fourths of the principals identifying it) was "Need to understand and determine the best uses of computers for instructional purposes" (70.8 per cent). The next two most frequently selected were training in use of computers for several management purposes (58.4 per cent) and training for their use by teachers and staff (42.8 per cent). It is noteworthy that determining the best uses of computers exceeds in frequency problems related to training of staff. Also, while not among the top three problems, "... the new state computer system implementation..." garnered responses identifying it as a problem area by some four out of ten respondents (40.8 per cent).

Table D

The Administrative Need Ranked #4:

"Legal Considerations"

Descriptors shown in rank order with number and per cent of principals identifying as among "most troublesome"

Rank	Descriptors	No. of Principals Identifying as "Most Troublesome"	Per cent of Principals
	LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS		
1	Need additional training in legal ramifications of new teacher evaluation instrument.	153	61.2
2	Raising teacher awareness of the laws under which the schools operate.	151	60.4
3	Need more knowledge of and/or improvement in documentation procedures.	129	51.6
4	Ramifications of conflicts involving school staff, students, and parents involving issues such as suspension, expulsion, corporal punishment, and negligence.	123	49.2
5	Dealing with legal problems that come about as a result of instruction, especially controversial themes in literary works, touchy subjects, etc.	74	29.6
6	Need additional training in due process considerations for students and staff.	72	28.8
7	Rights of students in relation to search and seizure, censorship, privacy of records, dress codes.	32	12.8

Comment

The legal ramifications of the new teacher evaluation instrument is the problem area cited most often by respondents (61.2 per cent). Next in frequency is "Raising teacher awareness of the laws under which the schools operate" (60.4 per cent). Just over half of all principals identified "Need more knowledge of and/or improvement in documentation procedures" (51.6 per cent).

Table E

The Administrative Need Ranked #5:

"Supervision, Evaluation of Staff"

Descriptors shown in rank order with number and per cent of principals identifying as among "most troublesome"

Rank	Descriptors	No. of Principals Identifying as "Most Troublesome"	Per cent of Principals
	SUPERVISION, EVALUATION OF STAFF		
1	Need additional skills in dealing with improvement of marginal staff members (teachers, principals, etc.)	176	70.4
2	Need training and practice in using mandated evaluation forms.	134	53.6
3	Need training in conferencing skills, observation skills, and formulation of improvement or growth plans for staff.	129	51.6
4	Planning for use of teachers and/or administrators in peer supervision.	80	32.0
5	Developing yearly goals and work plans for various staff positions.	79	31.6
6	Developing a comprehensive and on-going orientation program for new teachers/administrators.	77	30.8
7	Need to develop and learn uses of a management team for supervision.	66	26.4

Comment

Clearly touching more principals than did any of the other problem areas in this, the problem area "Need additional skills in dealing with improvement of marginal staff members (teachers, principals, etc.)" was identified by 70.4 per cent of the respondents. "Need training and practice using mandated evaluation forms" was the second most frequently cited problem area (53.6 per cent), and "...training in conferencing skills observation skills, and formulation of improvement or growth plans for staff" also was noted by about half (51.6 per cent) of the respondents.

Comparing principals' perceptions (for their own schools) with those of superintendents (for their school districts) we find:

Table E-1

Comparing Principals' and Superintendents' Most Frequently Identified Problem Areas Associated with "Supervision, Evaluation of Staff"

Supt's. Rank	Princ's Rank	Problem Area	% Princ's	%Supt's
1	1	Need additional skills in dealing with improvement of marginal staff members (teachers, principals, etc.)	70.4	74.1
2	2	Need training and practice in using mandated evaluation forms.	53.6	71.1
2	3	Need training in conferencing skills, observation skills, and formulation of improvement of growth plans for staff.	51.6	71.1
7	4	Planning for use of teachers and/or administrators in peer supervision.	32.0	11.9
4	5	Developing yearly goals and work plans for various staff positions.	31.6	36.3
6	6	Developing a comprehensive and on-going orientation program for new teachers/administrators.	30.8	14.8
5	7	Need to develop and learn uses of a management team for supervision.	26.4	20.0

For the administrative need "Supervision, evaluation of staff, we see a marked similarity in the perceptions of principals and superintendents as to the major problem areas in this domain. Dealing with marginal staff is the number one problem for both, help in preparing to use mandated evaluation forms is second, and training in conferencing, observation, and the development of growth plans for staff is third for principals and tied for the second place for superintendents.

Of some note is the greater interest in peer supervision by principals than by superintendents.

Table F

The Administrative Need Ranked #6:

"Instructional Supervision"

Descriptors shown in rank order with number and per cent of principals identifying as among "most troublesome"

Rank	Descriptors	No. of Principals Identifying as "Most Troublesome"	Per cent of Principals
	INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION		
1	Focusing supervision upon the teaching-learning situation rather than upon the teacher.	153	61.2
2	Need knowledge and approaches to organizing staff development to improve instruction.	126	50.4
3	Need to develop plan for utilization of the total staff in instructional supervisory behavior.	120	48.0
4	Making more effective use of newer methods, newer media, and new departures in instruction.	107	42.8
5	Need for administrators to improve skills in prioritizing instructional needs.	97	38.8
6	Need more training in special education instruction.	70	28.0
7	Need information on classroom management.	63	25.2

Principals give high priority to the problem area of "Focusing supervision upon the teaching-learning situation rather than upon the teacher" 961.2 per cent). Next in order of frequency is "Need knowledge and approaches to organizing staff development to improve instruction" (50.4 per cent). Third most often cited is "Need to develop plan for utilization of the total staff in instructional supervisory behavior" (48.0 per cent). Interestingly, classroom management, a topic often associated with such important considerations as discipline, school climate, and teacher failure, is the least often identified among the seven problem areas (25.2 per cent).

Table F-1

Comparing Principals' and Superintendents' Most Frequently Identified Problem Areas Associated with "Instructional Supervision"

Supt's. Rank	Princ's Rank	Problem Area	% Princ's	%Supt's
1	1	Focusing supervision upon the teaching-learning situation rather than upon the teacher.	61.2	67.4
3	2	Need knowledge and approaches to organizing staff development to improve instruction.	50.4	57.0
4	3	Need to develop plan for utilization of the total staff in instructional supervisory behavior.	48.0	46.7
5	4	Making more effective use of newer methods, newer media, and new departures in instruction.	42.8	32.6
2	5	Need for administrators to improve skills in prioritizing instructional needs.	38.8	59.3
7	6	Need more training in special education instruction.	28.0	9.6
6	7	Need information on classroom management.	25.2	24.4

Once again we find remarkable agreement between principals and superintendents as to the extent of the different problem areas within an administrative need, here "Instructional Supervision." Both selected the issue of attending to teaching and learning situations as distinct from focusing on the teacher, as their most frequently cited problem. For all of the remaining six of these problem areas, both principals and superintendents place them within one rank of each other, except for the problem area, "Need for administrators to improve skills in prioritizing instructional needs," which is found as a problem considerably more often by superintendents than by principals.

Table G

The Administrative Need Ranked #7:

"Time Management"

Descriptors shown in rank order with number and per cent of principals identifying as among "most troublesome"

Rank	Descriptors	No. of Principals Identifying as "Most Troublesome"	Per cent of Principals
	TIME MANAGEMENT		
1	Completing the increasing amount of paper-work without neglecting personal contact with students, teachers and parents.	216	86.4
2	Need techniques for managing time so as to allow for larger portion of time to be spent in instructional leadership role.	198	79.2
3	Need training in reducing excessive time spent on day-to-day school operations (routine main-tenance activities).	118	47.2
4	Setting priorities so that essential tasks are completed.	76	30.4
5	Methods of completing work-related obligations without interfering with family responsibilities.	63	25.2
6	Need assistance in improving delegating skills.	39	15.6
7	Handle meetings and meeting times more efficiently.	21	8.4

Managing increasing amounts of paperwork without neglecting personal contacts with students, teachers and parents is the top problem area in this group; almost 90% of all principals identified it (86.4 per cent). It is, in fact, the most frequently cited problem area by principals of the entire survey, and by a significant margin. The next highest item of the entire survey is at 79.2 per cent, and turns out to be the number two problem area in this group, "Need techniques for managing time so as to allow for large portion of time to be spent in instructional leadership." While the third most frequently identified problem area in this set is "Need training in reducing excessive time spent on day-to-day operations (routine maintenance activities), it is cited by fewer than half of the principals.

Principals had little difficulty in differentiating among these several possible problems associated with "Time Management." Completing paperwork requirements and finding ways to

devote more time to instructional leadership are the two major "Time Management" problems for principals. An important finding is that neither improving delegation skills nor handling meetings more efficiently are seen by principals as solutions to the problems.

Table H

The Administrative Need Ranked #8:

"In-Service for Staff (Certified and Classified)"

Descriptors shown in rank order with number and per cent of principals identifying as among "most troublesome"

Rank	Descriptors	No. of Principals Identifying as "Most Troublesome"	Per cent of Principals
	IN-SERVICE FOR STAFF (CERTIFIED AND CLASSIFIED)		
1	Motivating teachers to participate in in-service for curriculum improvement, not simply certification.	153	61.2
2	Dealing with staff/faculty when they are not receptive to in-service training.	130	52.0
3	Educating staff on effective schools.	113	45.2
4	Developing a reward system for staff who coordinate and conduct in-service.	94	37.6
5	Utilizing staff input to help determine in-service needs.	88	35.2
6	Need increased awareness in recognizing and utilizing expertise among staff and local community members for conducting staff development.	79	31.6
7	Need to learn creative scheduling to find adequate time for proper in-service.	78	31.2

The most important problem associated with in-service programs to principals is that of "Motivating teachers..." (61.2 per cent). The second most important problem is but a variation on the first "...staff...not receptive to in-service training" (52 per cent). Unrelated to these top two problems (which are about the reluctance of teachers to participate), the third most often cited is "Educating staff on effective schools" (45.2 per cent).

Principals did not distinguish decisively among these possible seven problem areas: only 30 per centage points separate the most and least often selected item. Staff developers who work with principals after giving top priority to the problems of motivating, stimulating and otherwise dealing with reluctant staff, might do well to attend to all seven of these problem areas.

Table I

The Administrative Need Ranked #9:

"Staff Morale, Group Dynamics"

Descriptors shown in rank order with number and per cent of principals identifying as among "most troublesome"

Rank	Descriptors	No. of Principals Identifying as "Most Troublesome"	Per cent of Principals
	STAFF MORALE, GROUP DYNAMICS		
1	Be able to identify characteristics of and to respond appropriately to burn-out in staff members.	152	60.8
2	Need to know how to provide opportunities for staff members to engage in professional/ personal development and renewal (knowledge, skills) activities.	118	47.2
3	Need methods of identifying opportunities to utilize a wider range of staff in decision-making.	110	44.0
4	Need improvement in various ways of providing feedback to staff.	108	43.2
5	How to foster faculty collegiality.	103	41.2
6	Need training in the Quality Circle approach to problem solving.	74	29.6
7	Need workshops in the management of small groups; i.e. discussion, disagreement, task allocation, consensus.	68	27.2

Knowing how to work with problems of burnout in staff members is the most frequently identified problem in this needs area, with 60.8 per cent noting it. Next most often cited is "Need to know how to provide opportunities for staff members to engage in professional (personal development and renewal/knowledge/skills) activities" (47.2 per cent).

Third selected in this set is "Need methods of identifying opportunities to utilize a wide range of staff in decision-making" (44 per cent).

Table I-1

Comparing Principals' and Superintendents' Most Frequently Identified Problem Areas Associated with "Staff Morale, Group Dynamics"

Supt's. Rank	Princ's Rank	Problem Area	% Princ's	%Supt's
5	1	Be able to identify characteristics of and to respond appropriately to burn-out in staff members.	60.8	37.8
3	2	Need to know how to provide opportunities for staff members to engage in professional/personal development and renewal (knowledge, skills) activities.	47.2	51.1
2	3	Need methods of identifying opportunities to utilize a wider range of staff in decision-making.	44.0	51.9
4	4	Need improvement in various ways of providing feedback to staff.	43.2	48.2
1	5	Need to foster faculty collegiality.	41.2	60.0
7	6	Need training in Quality Circle approach to problem solving.	29.6	11.9
6	7	Need workshops in the management of small groups; i.e. discussion, disagreement, task allocation, consensus.	27.2	37.0

There is some congruency between these two groups as to which problem areas are most frequently viewed as most troublesome. On two of these problem areas, however, both important as each is a top-ranked problem for one group but not for the other, there is a very different perception between principals and superintendents. Fostering faculty collegiality is a top-rated area for superintendents, while principals see it as a rather middle-level kind of problem. On the other hand, identifying and responding to staff burnout is a serious concern of principals, but is less often so for superintendents.

Table J

The Administrative Need Ranked #10:

"Classroom Management"

Descriptors shown in rank order with number and per cent of principals identifying as among "most troublesome"

Rank	Descriptors	No. of Principals Identifying as "Most Troublesome"	Per cent of Principals
	CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT		
1	Motivating and assisting teachers to utilize the maximum instructional time.	149	59.6
2	Need to know how to develop a program of improvement for teachers with management problems relating to students with low achievement levels, low self-esteem, etc.	147	58.8
3	Setting and maintaining high expectations within the classroom.	112	44.8
4	Need additional training in motivating teachers to share instructional skills for improvement of instruction.	108	43.2
5	Need help in recommending changes in classroom management to veteran teachers.	99	39.6
6	Need training in achieving consistency in rules and regulation regarding student behavior.	69	27.6
7	Need workshops involving teachers and parents working together on behavior techniques.	64	25.6

Working with teachers to maximize instructional time is the most frequently cited problems in this group (59.6 per cent). Closely following that is working with teachers to better manage low-achieving students (58.8 per cent). Third highest among this set is "Setting and maintaining high expectations within the classroom" (44.8 per cent).

The Ten Most Frequently Cited Problem Areas for Principals

A list of all seventy problem areas, rank-ordered from the most often to the least often identified as among the "most troublesome" by principals appears as Appendix A. From that list

we show below those ranked from first to tenth. These are the ten most-often cited administrative problems by principals regardless of their placement on the survey.

Table K

The Ten Problem Areas Most Frequently Identified as Among the "Most Troublesome," Showing Number and Percent of Principals

Rank	Problem Area	No. of Principals Identifying as "Most Troublesome"	Per cent of Principals
1	Completing the increasing amount of paper-work without neglecting personal contact with students, teachers and parents.	216	86.4
2	Need techniques for managing time so as to allow for larger portion of time to be spent in instructional leadership role.	198	79.2
3	Need to understand and determine the best use of computers for instructional purposes.	177	70.8
4	Need additional skills in dealing with improve-ment of marginal staff members (teachers, principals, etc.)	176	70.4
5	Need to know how to avoid producing unneces-sary stress for faculty and staff.	170	68.0
6	Improvement in dealing with unfavorable perfor-mance and/or termination of employees.	166	66.4
7	Need additional training in legal ramifications of new teacher evaluation instrument.	153	61.2
7	Focusing supervision upon the teaching-learning situation rather than upon the teacher.	153	61.2
7	Motivating teachers to participate in in-service for curriculum improvement, not simply certification.	153	61.2
10	Be able to identify characteristics of and to respond appropriately to burn-out in staff members.	152	60.8

Problem Areas that Aren't Really Problems to Principals

Which of the seventy problem areas are least often identified by principals? The answer could give some direction to staff developers as to the problem areas that might be omitted from in-service programs for principals. Given the widely noted caution that such programs be on-target for participants, such information could be crucial to those who select the content of such programs.

Table L

Ten Problem Areas LEAST Often Cited by Principals as Among the Most Troublesome

Rank	Problem Area	No. Principals	Per cent Principals
1	Handle meetings and meeting times more efficiently.	21	8.4
2	Rights of students in relation to search and seizure, censorship, privacy of records, dress codes.	32	12.8
3	Need assistance in improving delegating skills.	39	15.6
4	Need additional training in prioritizing goals and needs.	42	16.8
5	How to provide more feedback to central office regarding appropriateness of computer related decisions; e.g. software reports, etc.	43	17.2
6	Methods of completing work-related obligations without interfering with family responsibilities.	63	25.2
6	Need information on classroom management.	63	25.2
7	Need workshops involving teachers and parents working together on behavior techniques.	64	25.6
8	Need to develop and learn uses of a management team for supervision.	66	26.4
9	Need workshops in management of small groups; i.e. discussion, disagreement, task allocation, consensus.	68	27.2
10	Need training in achieving consistency in rules and regulations regarding student behavior.	69	27.6

Summary and Conclusions

Designed to probe the question of the specific administrative problems within their schools that Georgia's principals deem to be most troublesome, this study reports the findings of a 1988 survey sponsored by the Georgia Educational Leadership Academy. Results are based on a 62 per cent response from among 403 randomly selected elementary and secondary principals of the approximately 1800 of the state.

For each of ten needs areas that had been determined through a 1987 study to be the most critical as viewed by Georgia's principals, three specific problems are shown as selected most often by principals, yielding an array of problems of the highest priority to them. Because a parallel and concurrent study of superintendents was carried out by the writer we can show comparisons in four selected needs areas between principals and superintendents.

Two problems stand out above others in the view of principals. The first is completing the increasing amount of paperwork without neglecting personal contact with students, teachers, and parents. The second is time management, to allow for a larger portion of time to be spent in their instructional leadership role. A quartet of related problems among the ten most troublesome to principals center on working with marginal staff, focussed supervision, coping with unfavorable performance, and legal ramifications of teacher evaluation. Three problems areas that form a coherent triad within the ten most trying for principals included avoiding the production of stress for faculty, motivating teachers to participate in in-service programs, and responding to faculty and staff burn-out. All seventy problem areas are ranked from most to least often, and are also shown ranked within each of the ten critical needs areas.

An agenda of the more serious, specific concerns of school principals in Georgia emerges from this study. Through its sponsorship of this research, the Georgia Educational Leadership Academy has created new information as to the grass-roots concerns of local adminstrators, thus gaining new data to inform its decisions about statewide staff development and providing this information to others interested in the principalship in Georgia.

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Appendix A

Principals Survey

Rank Order of 70 Problem Areas as Identified by Georgia's Principals

Rank	Problem Area	No. of Principals Identifying as "Most Troublesome"	Per Cent of Principals
1	Completing the increasing amount of paperwork without neglecting personal contact with students, teachers and parents.	216	86.4
2	Need techniques for managing time so as to allow for larger portion of time to be spent in instructional leadership role.	198	79.2
3	Need to understand and determine the best use of computers for instructional purposes.	177	70.8
4	Need additional skills in dealing with improvement of marginal staff members (teachers, principals, etc.)	176	70.4
5	Need to know how to avoid producing unnecessary stress for faculty and staff.	170	68.0
6	Improvement in dealing with unfavorable performance and/or termination of employees.	166	66.4
7	Need additional training in legal ramifications of new teacher evaluation instrument.	153	61.2
7	Focusing supervision upon the teaching-learning situation rather than upon the teacher.	153	61.2
7	Motivating teachers to participate in in-service for curriculum improvement, not simply certification.	153	61.2
10	Be able to identify characteristics of and to respond appropriately to burn-out in staff members.	152	60.8
11	Raising teacher awareness of the laws under which the schools operate.	151	60.4
12	Motivating and assisting teachers to utilize the maximum instructional time.	149	59.6
13	Additional training in how to manage time effectively to reduce stress produced by one's daily workload.	148	59.2

Principal's Survey (cont'd)

14	Need to know how to develop a program of improvement for teachers with management problems relating to students with low achievement levels, low self-esteem, etc.	147	58.8
15	Need training in use of computers for scheduling of classes, record keeping, and other management uses.	146	58.4
16	Need training and practice in using mandated evaluation forms.	134	53.6
17	Dealing with staff/faculty when they are not receptive to in-service training.	130	52.0
18	Need more knowledge of and/or improvement in documentation procedures.	129	51.6
18	Need training in conferencing skills, observation skills, and formulation of improvement or growth plans for staff.	129	51.6
20	Need knowledge and approaches to organizing staff development to improve instruction.	126	50.4
21	Ramifications of conflicts involving school staff, students, and partners involving issues such as suspension, expulsion, corporal punishment, and negligence.	123	49.2
22	Need to develop plan for utilization of the total staff in instructional supervisory behavior.	120	48.0
23	Need defined criteria for use in identifying school/program effectiveness.	119	47.6
24	Need assistance in developing skills to manage change; i.e. diminished productivity, heightened anxiety, dissent, etc.	118	47.2
24	Need training in reducing excessive time spent on day-to-day school operations (routine maintenance activities).	118	47.2
24	Need to know how to provide opportunities for staff members to engage in professional/personal development and renewal (knowledge, skills) activities.	118	47.2
27	Increasing staff awareness of goals and their commitment to achieving these goals.	115	46.0
28	Need for additional training in needs analysis, clearly defined goals, and methods for achieving those goals.	113	45.2

Principals Survey (cont'd)

28	Educating staff on effective schools.	113	45.2
30	Setting and maintaining high expectations within the classroom.	112	44.8
31	Need methods of identifying opportunities to utilize a wider range of staff in decision-making.	110	44.0
32	Need improvement in various ways of providing feedback to staff.	108	43.2
32	Need additional training in motivating teachers to share instruction skills for improvement of instruction.	108	43.2
34	Developing effective non-threatening training opportunities for teachers and staff.	107	42.8
34	Making more effective use of newer methods, newer media, and new departures in instruction.	107	42.8
36	Need to know how to develop and manage an adequate information system to determine the effectiveness of a program.	104	41.6
37	How to foster faculty collegiality.	103	41.2
38	Need direction in new state computer system implementation and its effects on individual school reporting procedures.	102	40.8
39	Need help in recommending changes in classroom management to veteran teachers.	99	39.6
40	Need for administrators to improve skills in prioritizing instructional needs.	97	38.8
41	Need to correlate curriculum guides, textbooks, and learning materials when implementing change.	96	38.6
42	Developing a reward system for staff who coordinate and conduct in-service.	94	37.6
43	Assistance in developing awareness of indicators of stress.	91	36.4
44	Utilizing staff input to help determine in-service needs.	88	35.2
45	Evaluating and selecting hardware and software without having to depend on vendor representation.	86	34.4
46	Additional training in how to separate stress of personal life from day-to-day work life.	83	33.2

Principals Survey (cont'd)

47	Need to evaluate change to determine the success of the change.	81	32.4
48	Planning for use of teachers and/or administrators in peer supervision.	80	32.0
49	Developing yearly goals and work plans for various staff positions.	79	31.6
49	Need increased awareness in recognizing and utilizing expertise among staff and local community members for conducting staff development.	79	31.6
51	Need to learn creative scheduling to find adequate time for proper in-service.	78	31.2
52	Developing a comprehensive and on-going orientation program for new teachers/administrators.	77	30.8
53	Establishing and directing a working committee of staff who will evaluate the latest systems of data processing and will report regularly to the principal to keep the school up-to-date.	76	30.4
53	Setting priorities so that essential tasks are completed.	76	30.4
55	Dealing with legal problems that come about as a result of instruction, especially controversial themes in literacy works, touchy subjects, etc.	74	29.6
55	Need training in the Quality Circle approach to problem solving.	74	29.6
57	Need additional training in due process considerations for students and staff.	72	28.8
58	Need more training in special education instruction.	70	28.0
59	Need training in achieving consistency in rules and regulations regarding student behavior.	69	27.6
60	Need workshops in the management of small groups; i.e. discussion, disagreement, task allocation, consensus.	68	27.2
61	Need to develop and learn uses of a management team for supervision.	66	26.4
62	Need workshops involving teachers and parents working together on behavior techniques.	64	25.6
63	Need information on classroom management.	63	25.2

Principals Survey (cont'd)

63	Methods of completing work-related obligations without inerferring with family responsibilities.	63	25.2
65	How to provide more feedback to central office regarding appropriateness of computer related decisions; e.g. software reports, etc.	43	17.2
66	Need additional training in prioritizing goals and needs.	42	16.8
67	Need in-service training on how to delegate responsibility.	39	15.6
67	Need assistance in improving delegating skills.	39	15.6
69	Rights of students in relation to search and seizure, censorship, privacy of records, dress codes.	32	12.8
70	Handle meetings and meeting times more efficiently.	21	8.4